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UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

AN ANALYSIS OF SHELLEY'S HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty

Of the Graduate School of the University of Louisville

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Of Master of Arts

Department of English

By

Mona Belle Campbell

Year

1949

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July 2015

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TITLE OF THESIS: An Analysis of Shelley's Hymn to Intellectual Beauty

APPROVED BY READING COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

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DATE: March 31, 1949

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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

My interest in Shelley's Hymn to Intellectual Beauty was an outgrowth of a course in romantic poetry. After writing a short paper analyzing the Hymn, I realized the position it held in relation to Shelley's other writings. Realizing its importance and knowing that the paper left many phases of the poem untouched, I purposed to pursue the study on a larger scale.

The short study has brought to mind a number of questions regarding the poem. What does the poem say? What experiences of the author are reflected in the poem? From what sources are the ideas derived? Does Shelley handle the poetical devices in a way to make the poem a work of lasting value? In order to answer these questions it will be necessary to analyze four phases of the poem: the rhetorical structure, the experiences of the author reflected in the poem or influencing it, the source of the philosophy, and the style. Since an analysis of this kind has not been made, no doubt new truths will be discovered, permitting a fuller and more accurate interpretation of the poem.

The primary sources for biographical material are Newman Ivy White's two-volume life of Shelley, Shelley's

personal letters, and Mary Shelley's Journal. A number of other biographies serve for references for verification of detail. An Analytical Study of Shelley's Versification by Louise Propst furnishes excellent background material for the study of his style. A number of sources are available for the study of philosophy, among which The Magic Plant by Grabo, Shelley by White, and The Pursuit of Death by Kurtz are outstanding. The Julian edition of The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley is the main primary source.

CHAPTER II

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

CHAPTER II

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

Percy Bysshe Shelley, one of the foremost romantic poets of all times, was, especially in his century, a source of controversial criticism. The criticism ranged from one extreme to the other. On the one hand, William Rossetti ranked him with Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton as one of "the four sublimest sons of song that England has to boast of among the mighty";[1] on the other hand, D. M. Moir said his writings were "as little worth the attention of reasoning and responsible man as the heterogeneous reveries of nightmare."[2] Swinburne, speaking of the musical quality of his poetry, called him "the master-singer of our modern poets,"[3] and Symonds, "the loftiest and most spontaneous singer of our language,"[4] while Trent attributes to him only a "pseudo-power" discovered in weakness,[5]

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[1]William Rossetti, Lives of Famous Poets, 1878, p. 309, quoted in Charles Moulton, The Library of Literary Criticism (New York: Peter Smith, 1935), IV, 710.

[2]D. M. Moir, Sketches of the Poetical Literature of the Past Half-Century, 1850-1851, Ibid., p. 707.

[3]Algernon Swinburne, "Notes on the Text of Shelley," Fortnightly Review, 1869, II, 539, Ibid., p. 709.

[4]John Addington Symonds, Shelley (English Men of Letters), 1879, Ibid., p. 710.

[5]William P. Trent, The Authority of Criticism and Other Essays, 1899, p. 80, Ibid., p. 717.

and Jessopp, with "a falsetto voice" which "is pretty sure to shriek when he gets excited."[1] With the twentieth century, however, the criticism was more consistently in his favor. Major critics today analyze his poetry with the purpose of giving to humanity a conception of his philosophy and of pointing out the qualities that make his poetry an example of real art.

The Hymn to Intellectual Beauty shows evidence of Shelley's ability both as an artist and a philosopher. Kurtz classifies it as one of "the greatest mystical poems of the language" and then adds to its value by accrediting it with containing a "key to much of Shelley's later thought."[2] Holding this central position, the Hymn, then, can be approached as a unit of study with the assurance that, in addition to studying one of the great poems of English literature, an important step is being made toward the understanding of Shelley's entire philosophy. A close study of such a poem, no doubt, will also help to explain the change that has come about in the Shelley criticism.

Shelley's Hymn to Intellectual Beauty is composed of seven twelve-line, rhymed stanzas. In spirit it is a prayer to a relatively unknown Deity who is introduced in

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[1]Augustus Jessopp, "Books that have Helped Me," The Forum, 1887, 4, 33, Ibid., p. 713.

[2]Benjamin Putnam Kurtz, The Pursuit of Death (New York: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 94.

the first stanza as the poet talks to himself. The specific subject, "Intellectual Beauty," given only in the title is here metaphorically referred to as "The awful shadow of some unseen Power." Four characterisitcs of the shadow are included in this part. It has great beauty, is invisible and inconstant, and manifests itself in nature and in man. The beauty is of such a nature that it has great power over the mind although only its "shadow" is accessible to man. This aspect, only slightly referred to in the introduction, is developed more fully in the prayer. The fact that it is invisible is established when he says that it "Floats though unseen among us." However, he is assured of its presence in spite of its invisibility. The inconstancy of the shadow is strongly emphasized. This quality is partially included in the word "Floats," but is more forcefully indicated by the use of similes illustrating its various phases. "As summer winds that creep from flower to flower" illustrates its being unseen and ever-moving. The impression is deepened by the use of another simile, "Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower." Although the comparison this time is with something visible, it retains the ever-shifting, intangible character. Shelley then employs a series of similes from nature, comparable in quality to the "shadow," to illustrate the value we attach to evasive things. In this group he includes "hues and harmonies of evening,"

"clouds in starlight widely spread," and "memory of music fled." Just as the dearness of these things increases because they cannot be captured and retained, so does the value of this mysterious Beauty increase because of its invisibility and inconstancy. By appealing to three of the five senses Shelley has enlarged the effects of his comparisons. Seeing, hearing, and feeling are subjects of appeal in the different similes. Shelley, in specifying that the "shadow" visits "This various world" and also "each human heart and countenance," gives it a two-fold indwelling thus making its presence universal.

The prayer falls into three sub-divisions. The first characterizes and, to a large extent, sets forth the function of the Spirit of Beauty; the second is a personal section in which the poet's own experiences are related; the third is a resolution in which he prays for calmness in the afternoon of his life. These sub-divisions consist of stanzas two, three, and four; five and six; and seven, respectively.

The mood of the first section is one of questionings and doubt mingled with some primary elements of faith. Shelley begins the prayer by speaking directly to the "shadow" which he was describing in the introduction calling it "Spirit of Beauty." After telling us that its hues have power to consecrate all that they shine upon, he begins a plaintive questioning. He asks questions

which further characterize the Spirit. By asking "Where art thou gone?" and "Why dost thou pass away and leave our state, This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?", we learn that the absence of this Spirit brings unhappiness and despair. The latter question recalls similar conditions in nature and he begins to ask, by way of comparison, other questions. He points to conditions in nature. Why does not the rainbow remain forever over the mountain river?; why do things fade that once were bright? By accepting the inconstancy in nature, its light and shadow, he is reaffirming to himself that inconstancy is the order of nature, and by so doing he resigns himself to it. The same condition carries over to the emotional status of man. H e asks why fear, dream, death, and birth cast a gloom in the earth and why man has so wide a scope for such conflicting emotions as "love and hate, despondency and hope." The following stanzas begins by saying that so far no answer to these questions has been given to sage or poet; therefore such terms as "Demon, Ghost, and Heaven" have been invented as an explanation. However these were of no avail because they could not sever "Doubt, chance, and mutability" from life. Shelley then gives his answer to the questions. "Thy light alone," he says, "Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream." He continues by comparing this light which gives "grace and truth" to life to mist over the mountain, music sent

through the strings of an instrument, and "moonlight on a midnight stream." These similes only deepen the impression already made in regard to the intangible , inconstant qualities previously applied to the Spirit of Beauty. The next stanza, which concludes the first sub-division of the prayer, begins by saying that "Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds, depart And come." He makes the statement that if the Spirit would remain constant in man's heart he would be immortal and omnipotent. H e calls it a "messenger of sympathies" and characterizes it as nourishment to human thought "Like darkness to a dying flame!" Shelley, rising to a rather high emotional pitch, reveals an inward fear as he prays "Depart not, lest the grave should be, Like life and fear, a dark reality." We see by this statement that the presence of the Spirit enables him to face death and the grave, for by its absence the grave would become only a fearful reality.

Developing the personal section, Shelley, although still addressing the Spirit, discontinues his discussion of it and becomes more subjective. H e narrates experiences from his childhood search for the meaning of life. He had hoped for talks with the dead and tried various incantations to make this possible, but it was of no avail. "I was not heard; I saw them not." In contrast to these efforts, he tells us of an experience which led to his awakening to life and its purpose. One bright spring day,

which signified to Shelley an awakening and a new beginning in nature, as he was "musing on the lot Of life the shadow of the Spirit fell upon him. The immediate emotional effect of his experience is brought out in the last line of the stanza. "I shrieked and clasped my hands in ecstasy!" The ultimate result of the experience is indicated in the following stanza. He had a new motive in life. He vowed that he would dedicate his powers to Intellectual Beauty. To prove his faithfulness in keeping the vow, he, being still in a high emotional state, calls on "the phantoms of a thousand hours" to witness to the truth of this statement. His hope in the Spirit and his devotion to it was not alone for his own benefit, but was unselfishly devoted to freeing "This world from its dark slavery."

The last stanza shows a transition from the past to the future and from uncertainty to assurance. This stanza reveals a calmness which seems to have resulted from the confidence that his devotion to the Spirit would enable him to depend on it for the desired comfort in later life. Just as the day becomes more calm in the afternoon, and as the autumn is more lustrous than summer, so he prays that the "Spirit fair" will supply the calm to his "onward life." He restates his devotion to the Spirit and says that it caused him "To fear himself, and love all human kind." This final statement of his love for humanity

strengthens the former statement that his whole life had been linked with freeing the world. Because of his unselfish devotion to humanity he feels that he can justly claim the calmness which he so much desires.

CHAPTER III

EXPERIENCE

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EXPERIENCE

From the preceding analysis it is apparent that Shelley definitely projected himself in the Hymn. His primary purpose was to set forth his philosophy and to sing the praises of Intellectual Beauty, but supporting this is a background of experiences, the real reason for the poem's existence. Without at least a partial knowledge of these experiences, both mental and physical, the reader fails to partake of the real spirit of the poem. For this reason we shall go behind the stage to see just how much of Shelley's own life is reflected in the poem and in what way it is related to the main philosophy.

The experiences in Shelley's life which are reflected in the poem or had a bearing on it are three fold in nature: Shelley's search for the meaning of life through the supernatural, his dedication to freeing mankind, and his immediate experiences and state of mind at the time the poem was written.

The first of these phases is illustrated in the following lines from stanza five:

> While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
> Through many a listening chamber, cave and ruin,
> And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
> Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.
> I called on poisonous names with which our youth is fed,
> I was not heard--I saw them not--

While these searchings brought no apparent result, Shelley evidentally considered them important because of what they contributed to his life as a whole.

One of the earliest records of Shelley's search for the meaning of life by seeking for ghosts comes from Hogg's biography of Shelley which relates that Shelley

> sought out the lore of magic and witchcraft and learned incantations for raising ghosts and devils. He watched all night for ghosts. At Field Place he planned to gain entrance to the charnel house at Warnham Church and watch beside the bones of the dead. Once at Eton he stole forth at midnight fearfully intent on raising a ghost. Afraid to look back lest he should see the devil, he crossed the fields to a spot where he could bestride a small stream of running water. Here he repeated his incantation, drinking three times from a skull and when no ghost appeared he concluded that the fault lay in his magic formula.[1]

This story was told to Hogg as being representative of Shelley's pre-Eton and Eton days. We are not dependent on this story alone for evidence of Shelley's interest in the supernatural. Tom Medwin, an Etonian friend, testifies as much,[2] and Walter Halliday in thinking back over

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[1]Thomas Jefferson Hogg, The Life of Shelley, ed. H umbert Wolfe (London, 1933), 1, 36-37, cited by Newman Ivy White, Shelley (2 vols.; New York: A. A. Knopf, 1940), 1, 41.

[2]Thomas Medwin, Revised Life of Shelley, ed. H. B. Forman (London, 1913), p. 58, Ibid.

his experiences with Shelley at Eton recalls:

> We used to wander for hours about Clewer, Frogmore, the park at Windsor, the Terrace; and I was a delighted and willing listener to his marvelous stories of fairyland, and apparitions, and spirits, and haunted ground; and his speculations were then (for his mind was far more developed than mine) of the world beyond the grave. Another of his favourite rambles was Stoke Park, and the picturesque churchyard, where Gray is said to have written his Elegy, of which he was very fond.[1]

Just exactly when Shelley began these searches and experiments we do not know, but we do have evidence that his interest in such continued throughout several years following his life at Eton, and the effects of it were felt throughout his life. After he had spent a year at Oxford and was writing to Hogg from Field Place he says:

> I am very cold this morning, so you must excuse bad writing, as I have been most of the night pacing a churchyard.[2]

Nearly a year elapsed and Shelley, in the meantime, had been expelled from Oxford, and eloped with Harriet and was making plans for his program for Irish emancipation. He wrote quite freely to his friend, Elizabeth Hitchener:

> We shall then meet in Wales. I shall try to domesticate in some antique feudal castle whose mouldering turrets are fit emblems of decaying in equality and oppression: whilst the ivy shall wave its green banners above like Liberty and

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[1]Hogg, op. cit., I, 41-42, quoted by White, op. cit., I, 41.

[2]Percy Bysshe Shelley, Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, eds. Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck (the Julian Edition, 10 vols.; New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1926-1930), VIII, 37.

> flourish upon the edifice that essayed to crush its root. As to the ghosts, I shall welcome them, altho' Harriet protests against my invoking them. But they would tell tales of times of old; and it would add to the picturesqueness of the scenery to see their thin forms flitting through the valted charnels.[1]

Upon Shelley's return from Ireland he found it difficult to locate a vacant house; however, he finally settled in one not far from Cwm Elan where he had spent a great deal of his life. In a letter inviting Miss Hitchner to join them, he gives a description of the house.

> We are embosomed in the solitude of mountains, woods, and rivers--silent, solitary, and old, far from any town; six miles from Rhayader, which is nearest. A ghost haunts this house, which has frequently been seen by servants. We have several witches in our neighbourhood, and are quite stocked with fairies and hobgoblins of every description.[2]

Only a few months following this letter Shelley wrote to Godwin and introduced himself by giving a brief summary of his life. This letter reveals that his interest in ghosts and incantations was subsiding. He told Godwin that though he had read Albertus Magnus and Paracelsus, "My fondness for natural magic and ghosts abated, as my age increased."[3]

Although Shelley declared that his "fondness for ghosts had abated," evidence remains that his later life

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[1] Ibid., VIII, 253.
[2] Ibid., p. 309.
[3] Ibid., p. 331.

was also influenced by allowing his mind to dwell on such things. During his residence at Tanyrallt he believed he had been assaulted by a real person, while his sketch of the assailant resembled that conventionally pictured as a devil or a ghost of some kind.[1] On two different occasions he suffered horrible hallucinations after indulging in telling ghost stories. The first of these occurred in 1814 while he and Jane Clairmont, Mary's half-sister, were sitting up late into the night making mention of the "witching hour." After a few such brief remarks they both became so filled with horror that they sat up all night.[2] The other incident occurred very shortly before the boat excursion and the writing of the Hymn. The little group of tourists, including Shelley, Mary, Jane Clairmont, Byron, and Polidori, Byron's physician, was sitting around Byron's fireside reading German ghost stories. Much was said about the horrors included in the stories. Two nights later similar talk was taking place when Byron discussed Coleridge's "Cristabel" and quoted the lines alluding to the witch's deformity. Shelley, who had been staring at Mary, screamed and fled from the room. After he was restored to normality it was learned that "he had been shocked into uncontrollable horror by seeing a vision of

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[1]White, op. cit., I, 283.
[2]Ibid., p. 373.

a woman he had once read about who had eyes for nipples."[1] Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, an outgrowth of these discussions, always received encouragement and attention from Shelley.

After seeing the prominent part that the supernatural played in Shelley's life even up to the time of the writing of the Hymn, it is not surprising that he included it as one of the most impressive phases of his search for the meaning of life. It represented an earnest longing for communication with a being greater than himself and a strong desire to know the real purpose of life.

Shelley's interest in freeing mankind is introduced in stanza six. After calling "the phantoms of a thousand hours" as witnesses to the truth of his state - ment, he says:

> They know that never joy illumed my brow
> Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst free
> This world from its dark slavery,

Shelley's biographies, personal letters, and poems verify this interest in freedom. Sometimes the references are very personal. He desires to free himself from any bond, whether it be social or political, but more often he is concerned with the freedom of humanity in general.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 443-444.

At an early age Shelley indicated an interest in this subject. When he was only ten or twelve years of age he resolved:

> I will be wise
> And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies
> Such power, for I grow weary to behold
> The selfish and the strong still tyrannize
> Without reproach or check.[1]

He was at the time a student at Syon House and had undergone rather severe treatment at the hands of older and stronger students, and his sensitive mind was quick to see the injustice of the system. A reiteration of this statement may be found in a letter to Leigh Hunt. This one having been written several years later indicates that he did not swerve from his original purpose. As a matter of fact, he began to make plans to carry out his resolution.

> On account of the responsibility to which my residence at this University subjects me, I of course, dare not publicly avow all that I think, but the time will come when I hope that my every endeavor, insufficient as this may be, will be directed to the advancement of liberty.[2]

Shelley's vigilance in protecting himself from any bonds, is illustrated in the attitude he took toward the suggestion that he take up a political career. Shelley considered such a suggestion "an attempt to shackle his mind."[3]

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[1] Ibid., p. 28.
[2] Shelley, Works, VIII, 56.
[3] White, op. cit., I, 135.

His attitude toward the problem of freedom did not long after this remain a dormant resolution. It took on a more active significance in the case of Peter Finnerty, an Irish journalist who had been sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment "for speaking his mind to Lord Castlereagh in a letter published in the Morning Chronicle."[1] When a subscription was taken, much to the disapproval of some of the Oxford officials, Shelley's name ranked high on the list.

Following this incident Shelley expressed some of his religious views in the pamphlet, "The Necessity of Atheism." Upon being expelled from Oxford for this publication, Shelley, it seems, considered himself a martyr for the sake of intellectual freedom. Any proposals for compromise on the matter were to him but proposals to give up a measure of his liberty, and this he refused to do.[2] His marriage to Harriet Westbrook, an outgrowth of his unpopular publication, was for much the same reason. He was trying to "free" her from persecution brought on by her faith in his philosophy.[3] Since he confessed to Hogg a short time before the elopement that he was not in love,[4]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 107-108.
[2] Ibid., p. 135.
[3] Ibid., p. 149.
[4] Shelley, Works, VIII, 136.

we conclude that the marriage was entirely for the sake of his philosophy.

Being a sympathetic listener, Elizabeth Hitchener became the recipient of numerous letters in which Shelley expounded his philosophies without restraint. Shelley had met her during one of his vacations.[1] She was a schoolmistress of liberal views and wide reading.[2] A correspondence began. She became his ideal and he wrote with utmost freedom to her. He called her the "sister of my soul"[3] and in one letter he remarked: "To you I tell everything that passes to my soul, even the secret thoughts sacred alone to sympathy."[4] Scattered throughout his letters to her we find frequent statements such as these:

> I consider you one of those beings who carry happiness, reform, liberty, wherever they go.[5]
>
> * * *
>
> When may we unite? What might we not do, if together? If two hearts panting for the happiness and liberty of mankind, were joined together by union and proximity, as they are by friendship and sympathy.[6]
>
> * * *
>
> Assert your freedom--the freedom of truth and nature.[7]

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[1] White, op. cit., I, 141.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Shelley, Works, VII, 158.
[4] Ibid., III, 224.
[5] Ibid., III, 206.
[6] Ibid., p. 247.
[7] Ibid., p. 262.

Shelley's major "freedom movement" is connected with his attempt at Irish emancipation. From the time that Shelley had made his first declaration of devotion to liberty, as referred to previously, until the time of his Irish experiment there was a gradual crescendo in that direction. His youthful enthusiasm and self-confidence required an outlet. The first mention of this project is found in a letter to Elizabeth Hitchener dated December 11, 1811.[1] However it was February 12, 1812, before the Shelleys reached Dublin to begin their work. White very effectively summarized the conditions existing at that time.[2] Protestants were in power and the oppression of the Catholics was the result. Very poor economic conditions existed and tyranny reigned throughout the country. It was the relief of the oppressed and the poor that Shelley wanted to effect. In spite of these conditions Shelley's optimism finds poetic expression in a letter to Miss Hitchener, his "soul sister."

> The ocean rolls between us. O thou Ocean, whose multitudinous billows ever lash Erin's green isle, on whose shores this venturous arm would plant the flag of liberty, Roll on! and with each wave whose echoings die, amid thy melancholy silentness shall die a moment too--one of those moments, which part my friend and me![3]

Shelley's first step was to publish and distribute

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[1] Ibid., p. 212.
[2] White, op. cit., I, 210.
[3] Shelley, Works, VIII, 270.

his "Address to the Irish People." Dublin was the main center of distribution. His purpose was not to excite a revolt, but rather to teach tolerance, temperance, and benevolence.[1] A couple of brief quotations from this pamphlet will illustrate his method of approach.

> Do not drink, do not play, do not spend any idle time, do not take every thing that other people say for granted--there are numbers who will tell you lies to make their own fortunes, you cannot more certainly do good to your own cause, than by defeating the intentions of these men.
>
> • • • •
>
> If you have anything to spare from your wife and children, let it do some good to other people, and put them in a way of getting wisdom and virtue, as the pleasure that will come from these good acts will be much better than the headache that comes from a drinking bout. And never quarrel between each other, be all of one mind as nearly as you can; do these things and I will promise you liberty and happiness.[2]

Another pamphlet which was a proposal for a philanthropist association followed[3] and at least one public address was made.[4] The positive results of this attempt at liberation were negligible. Since little notice was taken of the program, his attempt to convert the Irish nation in two months was given up as a failure by Shelley as is indicated in a letter to Miss Hitchener.

> We left Dublin because I had done all that I could do; if its effects were beneficial, they

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[1] White, op. cit., I, 210.
[2] Shelley, Works, V, 229-230.
[3] White, op. cit., I, 209.
[4] Ibid., p. 215.

> were not greatly so. I am dissatisfied with my success, but not with the attempt.[1]

White makes an interesting observation concerning the effect of this experiment on Shelley. It is important that it did not leave Shelley's feeling that his failure had ruined his life, but rather left him the wiser that he might continue his efforts by another method.

> The effect [of the Irish reformation efforts] on Shelley, however, was far greater than that on Ireland. He had opened an active campaign of human amelioration toward which he considered his whole life should be dedicated. He had learned or partly learned, that patriots may be tyrants; that between a clear abstraction of justice in a benevolent, philosophic mind and its effective application to conditions in a wretched community, even the professed friends of justice interposed almost insuperable obstacles. His devotion to reform and his confidence in its ultimate achievement remained unshaken, but the same surprising philosophic maturity that marked his An Address to the Irish People had taught him that genuine and lasting enlightenment was far more a matter of the distant future than he had previously supposed.[2]

After this experience his efforts were directed more through his writing. As is indicated in the Hymn, he placed his confidence in a divine being, but believed the artist to be the channel through which the liberation should be brought about. Changing his technique, however, did not lessen his earnestness. He still retained his original purpose and wrote to that end. Although no major writings were published between the Irish emancipation

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[1]Shelley, Works, VIII, 308.
[2]White, op. cit., I, 227.

efforts and the writing of the Hymn, his letters frequently alluded to freedom or liberty. Even the excursion with all of its beauties did not blind his eyes to the conditions of humanity. They seemed to be ever on his mind. He recorded his impression of one of the little villages they passed during their trip:

> The appearance of the inhabitants of Evian is more wretched, diseased and poor, than I ever recollect to have seen. The contrast . . . affords a powerful illustration of the blighting mischiefs of despotism, within the space of a few miles.[1]

In speaking of the Prison of Chillon he says:

> I never saw a monument more terrible of that cold and inhuman tyranny, which it has been the delight of man to exercise over man.[2]

With such scenes as these to remind him of his purpose in life, even in his hymn to beauty he could not omit it.

Though Shelley merely mentioned in the Hymn that he had dedicated his life to the force which he believed could free the world, his biographies and letters verify the fact that the interest was a motivating force of his whole life. The statement in the Hymn is, relatively speaking, only a mild expression of the life of experience and intense desire inspiring it. How appropriate the form of a hymn to express a longing so sacred! How very fitting to make the desire known to a deity!

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[1]Shelley, Works, VI, 126.
[2]Ibid., p. 130.

Having seen those experiences that were rooted in his early life and grew and developed with the man, we turn now to that experience which inspired the writer to combine these experiences and ideas into a definite form, the Hymn.

It was written in 1816 in Switzerland, and was published January 19, 1817, in the Examiner with Shelley's own signature. The poem, however, was originally sent to the publisher with the signature, "Elfin Knight," Mary's familiar name for him.[1] In his answer to the editor's request to publish it with his own signature, Shelley explained his reason for using a pen name rather than his own.

> Next, will I own the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty?" I do not care--as you like. And yet the poem was composed under the influence of feelings which agitated me even to tears, so that I think it deserves a better fate than the being linked with so stigmatized an unpopular a name (so far as it is known) as mine.[2]

Shelley evidently prized the experience inspiring this philosophical poem and was trying to protect it from public criticism by withholding his name from it.

The poem was written during one of the happiest periods in Shelley's life.[3] Shelley, Mary, William

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[1] Ibid., IX, 208.

[2] Ibid., p. 208.

[3] Unless otherwise stated the facts of this period of Shelley's life are taken from: White, op. cit., pp. 438-464.

(Shelley's young son), and Claire had planned a trip to Italy, but they changed their plans at the last and decided to go to Switzerland instead.[1] Soon after arriving in Geneva, the group found a suitable location on Lake Leman. There Shelley settled to read and study. A few days later Byron and his physician, Dr. John Polidori, arrived in Geneva and located in a villa less than ten minutes walk from the Shelleys. Shelley and Byron jointly purchased a small sailing boat in which the two parties went sailing each evening. These daily sailing excursions were a source of pleasure and inspiration to both poets. The two read together and freely discussed literary topics. The quietness of their location and the beauty of their surroundings were conducive to the development of their poetical talents.

The immediate inspiration for the writing of the Hymn came during an excursion around Lake Leman from June 23 to July 1. Byron and Shelley were the only ones of either party to participate in this excursion. Shelley's record of the trip in a letter of July 12 to Thomas Love Peacock reestablishes his later remark that the poem "was composed under the influence of feelings which agitated me even to tears." In this letter Shelley goes into enthusiastic descriptions of the beauties of nature which

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[1]This decision seems to have resulted from Claire's special interest in Byron at the time. White, op. cit., I, 435-436.

he beheld. Although the letter was written two weeks after the trip was over, it reveals a retention, at least in part, of the intense emotional pitch which he had reached in response to the beauties around him. His descriptions of nature are highly poetical in their wording. After an introductory remark the letter begins:

> This journey has been on every account delightful, but most especially, because then I first knew the divine beauty of Rousseau's imagination, as it exhibits itself in "Julie." It is inconceivable what an enchantment the scene itself lends to those delineations, from which its own most touching charm arises.[1]

Describing the lake from one of the little villages where they stopped for the night, he says:

> It was beautiful to see the vast expanse of these purple and misty waters broken by the craggy islets near to its slant and "bleached margin."[2]

A description of the mountains is expressed with equal beauty.

> The mountains of Savoy, whose summits were bright with snow, descended in broken slopes to the lake; on high the rocks were dark with pine forests, which become deeper and more immense, until the ice and snow mingle with the points of naked rock that pierce the blue air; but below, groves of walnut, chestnut, and oak, with openings of lawny fields, attested the milder climate.[3]

Another example is his description of an inland waterfall.

> The stream is, indeed, from the declavity over which it falls, only a succession of waterfalls,

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[1]Shelley, Works, IX, 167.
[2]Ibid., p. 168.
[3]Ibid., p. 169.

> which roar over the rocks with a perpetual sound, and suspend their unceasing spray on the leaves and flowers that overhang and adorn its savage banks. The path that conducted along this river sometimes avoided the precipices of its shores, by leading through meadows; sometimes threaded the base of perpendicular and caverned rocks. I gathered in these meadows a nosegay of such flowers as I never saw in England, and which I thought more beautiful for that rarity.[1]

Many other equally revealing passages occur in this letter, but these, I believe, are sufficient to illustrate the point that this excursion made an unusual impression on the mind of Shelley and did much to inspire and stimulate him. This close contact with nature could easily explain such phrases in the Hymn as "moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower," "rainbows o'er yon mountain river," or "moonlight on a midnight stream." These pleasant experiences likewise would be conducive to a poem on beauty and are in harmony with the note of faith on which the poem ends.

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[1] Ibid., p. 173.

CHAPTER IV

PHILOSOPHY

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Shelley's ideas concerning intellectual beauty were not original with him, neither did his interest in freedom develop entirely without inspiration and encouragement from others. His ideas and interests were the results of much reading and personal development. His attitude and ideas being affected by his own times and by contemporary writers made him a product of his times as well as a reflector for ancient philosophies.

The careful accounts of Shelley's reading have been of great value in determining the source of many of his ideas. These accounts, occurring in letters, Mary Shelley's Journal, and biographies, reveal an unusually wide scope. He began reading scientific pamphlets and "trashy thrillers" while yet at Syon House. It was during this period also that he became acquainted with the works of "Monk" Lewis.[1] During his six years at Eton his reading increased in both quantity and quality. While

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[1]White, op. cit., I, 22, 24, 29. Lewis' novels had a strong influence in directing Shelley's interest to ghosts and the supernatural. White cites him as one of the strongest influences in Shelley's early reading. Ibid., p. 29.

there his reading included, among many others, such volumes as Pliny's Natural History, Plato's Symposium, the works of Albertus Magnus and Paracelsus, Thalaba, The Curse of Kehama and Lucretius' De Rerum Natura.[1] Such a list is quite a credit to a boy under eighteen years of age.

Although his stay at Oxford was short, his reading was even more extensive than it had been in earlier years. He continued reading Plato's dialogues through this period. Godwin's Political Justice and Tom Paine's The Rights of Man were volumes of special importance during this period because of the immediate and far reaching influence they had on his thinking and writing.[2]

The years following his expulsion from Oxford were filled with writing and financial and domestic worries, yet he found time for reading. High points in his reading of this period consisted of histories, the philosophical and metaphysical writings of such authors as Epicurus, Diderot, Condorcet, Paine, Hume, Godwin, Volney, and Lucretius, and the poetry of Spenser, Shakespeare, Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge.[3]

With the exception of a lost section of the Journal covering the time from May 14, 1815, to July 20, 1816,[4] a

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[1] Ibid., pp. 50-52.
[2] Ibid., pp. 97-98.
[3] Ibid., pp. 277-278.
[4] Mary Shelley, Mary Shelley's Journal, ed. Frederick L. Jones (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1947), p. 50 n.

fairly complete record of Shelley's reading is available after his separation from Harriet and elopement with Mary. Counting those volumes read in part and those read in entirety from July 28, 1914, the time of their elopement, to May 13, 1915, the last of Mary's Journal preceding the writing of the Hymn, we find eighty-seven volumes to Shelley's credit.[1] This number represented only about one year of his reading. It is no wonder that Grabo observes that Shelley "must at the time of his death have been for his years, one of the best-read men in Europe."[2]

Shelley took from this extensive reading ideas to form his own philosophy. It is obvious from reading Shelley that he did not follow the teaching of any one writer, nor even take from the writings unmodified ideas to inculcate in his philosophy. Rather his philosophy became a fusion of many with a few of them dominating. This being true, it would be impossible to point to one source, or even a number of sources, and say that the Hymn was an outgrowth of that and that alone. Rather it will be the aim of this section to analyze the main elements in relationship to his reading to discover which sources dominate and which are used to modify the dominant.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 32-33; 47-50.

[2] Carl Henry Grabo, The Magic Plant; the Growth of Shelley's Thought (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1936), p. 31.

Before approaching the philosophy in the Hymn itself, it will be profitable to our study to observe the development of the philosophies as expressed in his earlier writings. Although such writings are few and, as a whole, lack literary value, they reveal a gradual preparation for the Hymn which expressed a philosophy recurring in modified forms in much of Shelley's later poetry.

Zastrozzi, a Romance, appearing in 1810,[1] was the earliest published work of which we have a record. This novel is a tale of horror, and at the time of publication it was severely criticized by reviewers for its savagery.[2] Shelley's first attempt at writing poetry is represented in the little volume, Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire, published soon after Zastrozzi. A discovery that at least one of the poems was a plagiarism led to the destruction of the volume.[3] Some of these juvenilia, however, indicate Shelley's trend toward opposition to tyranny and oppression.[4] The Wandering Jew and St. Irvyne, were also lacking in literary merit. Nothing new philosophically was added as these were also tales of suffering and horror. All of these Eton productions reveal the rebellion of his nature against tyranny and injustice.

"The Necessity of Atheism," a small pamphlet challenging the religious world of the day for proof of its

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[1]White, op, cit., I, 55.
[2]Ibid., pp. 56-57.
[3]Ibid., p. 58.
[4]Grabo, op. cit., p. 31.

Deity, was so unorthodox that Shelley's expulsion from Oxford was an immediate result.[1] Shelley specified in the advertisement that the purpose of the pamphlet was to find truth.[2] He had hoped to inspire replies that he might make his decision in the light of all offered evidence. Rather than arguing that there was no Deity, he stated that from the three sources of knowledge--physical experience, reason, and testimony--the proof was not sufficient to establish the existence of God.[3] He later specified in the note to Queen Mab[4] and also in a letter to Godwin[5] that he was alluding to a creative Deity in the conventional sense rather than the Spirit of which he speaks in his later works.

The Address to the Irish People has been referred to in the second chapter in connection with his Irish emancipation program. With this pamphlet Shelley began to apply his theories. The method and outcome of this experiment have been observed.

With Queen Mab, published in 1813,[6] Shelley produced his first major poem. Although critics never fail to point out its weaknesses, the very nature of the poem

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[1] Ibid.
[2] Shelley, Works, V, 207-209.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., I, p. 146.
[5] Ibid., VIII, 240-241.
[6] Ibid., I, 63.

demands a place in the study of Shelley's philosophy. White gives an excellent summary of the ideas expressed in the poem:

> The spirit of Nature and life is Necessity, a passionless, impartial force knowing no limits or decay. It extends throughout the whole universe and governs every minute action of every atom of the natural world, and every whim of thought. Nothing acts but as it must act and was predestined to act, without the variation of a hair, from the first instant of time. Mankind is naturally virtuous and happy, but man has degenerated through the growth of certain evils. Eventually these evils must perish of their own corruption, restoring humanity to virtue and happiness. At present, however, "man's all subduing will" tolerates his own evils, which depend upon selfishness, superstition, lust, and an animal diet that carries with it the seed of moral and physical evil. God (as Volney and Voltaire) is a depraved creation of the human mind, a celestial tyrant on an earthly model. Human ignorance and selfishness, as best shown in priestcraft, kingcraft, and commerce, are the causes of tyranny and warfare. Marriage is an expression of selfishness and violation of individual liberty. It becomes an intolerable tyranny as soon as either party grows tired of it. These are the lessons of the past and present and the basis for hope for the future.[1]

After mentioning a number of possible sources for these various ideas, White concludes:

> Most of the philosophical thought is so much the common property of eighteenth-century radical philosophy, and even sometimes of the ancient Epicureans, that it is futile to attempt to assign it to any one particular source.[2]

Among those known sources he mentions such writers as Volney, Voltaire, Godwin, Paine, and Baron d Holbach.[3] Grabo

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[1] White, op. cit., I, 293.
[2] Ibid., p. 292.
[3] Ibid.

adds another source, Plato. It is this touch of Platonism that relates Queen Mab most closely to the Hymn.

> The philosophy which Shelley avows in Queen Mab is largely necessitarian and materialistic. But the beliefs that all matter lives, that spirit is immortal, that there is soul as well as body, are of different origin. . . This is sheer Platonism in its belief in a preexistence and in the discipline of life as needful to the soul's education. The "outward shows," too, with its implication of a reality behind the shows, is clearly Platonistic.[1]

These statements confirm the preceding observation that Shelley's reading became actively a part of him rather than passive knowledge. His philosophy, although conflicting at times, was taking shape. Rather than taking another's philosophy, he was taking from the different ones ideas which he could fit into a philosophy of his own.

Grabo points to "Alastor" as evidence of Shelley's transformation from the man to the artist.[2] This poem was published in January, 1816,[3] the early part of the same year in which the Hymn was written. "Alastor" in varying degrees serves as a forerunner to the Hymn stylistically and philosophically as well as chronologically. By making the following comparisons, one can see the similarities.

The Hymn addresses the all pervading Spirit calling it "Spirit of Beauty"; "Alastor" calls a comparable power

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[1]Grabo, op. cit., p. 217-218.
[2]Ibid., p. 172.
[3]Ibid.

"Mother of this unfathomable world" (l. 18) In both poems the poet trusts this power to give him necessary aid and guidance. In the Hymn Shelley says he

> . . . . . sought for ghosts, and sped
> Through many a listening chamber, cave and ruin
> And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
> Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.

The poet in "Alastor" made his bed "In charnels and on coffins," hoping to force "some lone ghost, Thy messenger, to render up the tale of what we are." (ll. 27-29) In both of these cases the search came from an inherent desire to know the meaning of life. Both poems contain a vision. The one in the Hymn is a sudden realization of a great truth; in "Alastor," a veiled maid. Each experience occurs in the spring and is a sudden and unexpected one. The concluding moods of each leave the poet in a condition of serenity. As in Queen Mab Plato is not the main source or inspiration of the poem, but his influence is seen in the under current. Grabo has called attention to this strain.

> The great "Mother of this unfathomable world" whom he invokes at the outset is akin to the "spirit which rolls through all things" but her shadow which he has watched suggests a Platonic idea of the world of reality whose shadow, the actual counterpart of the real, becomes in Shelley's later and habitual employment of it a familiar symbol. Shelley first uses it here with full consciousness of its metaphysical implication. The familiar earth of nature is the shadow of the unseen loveliness and in the study of nature is to be found an intimation of the divine reality.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 175.

This idea is also in the Hymn.

Thus the philosophy expressed in the Hymn was not the result of a sudden inspiration, but was the outgrowth of a number of ideas developed through the years. His attitude toward tyranny and freedom, his search for the meaning of life, and his conception of the Absolute, or Spirit of Beauty, were expressed in modified forms throughout his writings preceding the Hymn.

In the light of comparisons and of the fact that Shelley read and greatly admired Plato several years before writing the Hymn, one can point to him as the most likely source for the dominant theme, Intellectual Beauty. As analyzed in the first chapter, Intellectual Beauty is inconstant and invisible. Only its shadow visits the world and the human heart. It is of such great power that a sudden visitation from it produced a lasting influence upon the poet. As an outcome of the experience the poet looked to it as the hope of freeing mankind. This Intellectual Beauty became to Shelley the Absolute, or in terms often applied to the Platonic theory, the Idea, which is abstract rather than concrete, thus limiting contact with it to the mind.

Plato's Symposium contains a discussion of this supreme Beauty which Shelley called "intellectual beauty"

in his translation:[1]

> It is eternal, unproduced, undestructible; neither subject to increase nor decay; not, like other things, partly beautiful and partly deformed; not beautiful in relation to one thing and deformed in that of another; not here beautiful and there deformed; not beautiful in the estimation of one person and deformed in that of another; nor can this supreme beauty be figured to the imagination like a beautiful face, or beautiful hands, or any portion of the body, nor like any discourse, nor any science. Nor does it subsist in any other that lives or is, either in earth, or in heaven, or in any other place; but it is eternally uniform and consistent, and monoeidic with itself. All other things are beautiful through a participation of it, with this condition, that although they are subject to production and decay, it never becomes more or less, or endures any change.[2]

Such seems to be the beauty of which Shelley speaks in his Hymn. Although Plato is much more detailed in his treatment, the qualities that Shelley does specify are in harmony with Plato's.

In another respect the Hymn appears to be Platonic with possible divergencies entering in. Plato specifies the method by which this Idea of beauty may be reached.

> And the true order of going, or being led by another to the things of love, is to begin from the beauties of earth and mount upwards for the

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[1]The translation was made in 1818, two years after the composition of the Hymn. Edmund Blunden, Shelley (New York: The Viking Press, 1947), p. 209. The very fact that he called it "intellectual beauty" as he titled the Hymn indicates that his conception of beauty in both works must have been very much the same.

[2]Plato, Symposium, trans. P. B. Shelley, Five Dialogues of Plato Bearing on Poetic Inspiration, ed. Ernest Rhys (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1910), p. 60.

> sake of that other beauty, using these as steps only, and from one going on to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair practices, and from fair practices to fair notions, until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is.[1]

This is a slow mental process by which absolute beauty is approached. On the other hand, Shelley's experience seems to be, on the surface, a sudden conversion.

> Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
> I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!

Both Barrell[2] and Gingerich[3] use this difference as a basis for labeling the Hymn non-Platonic. A little closer study of the Hymn in comparison with Plato will clarify this point. In the first place Shelley is not giving a detailed philosophical discussion of the approach to beauty as was Plato. Shelley is merely describing the final stage of the experience. He specifies, however, that he was "musing deeply on the lot of life" at the time of the experience. Shelley also specifies that the experience occurred "at that sweet time when winds are wooing all vital things that wake to bring News of birds and blossoming." Although Shelley does not specify that the beautiful objects about him led to the experience,

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[1]Plato, Symposium, The Dialogues of Plato, trans. B. Jowett (New York: Random House, 1937), I, 211.

[2]Joseph Barrell, Shelley and the Thought of His Times (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), pp. 126-7.

[3]Francis S. Gingerich, Essays in the Romantic Poets (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), pp. 212-3.

step by step, the very way in which he connects the experience with the surroundings indicates a close relationship between the two.

Even Plato describes the final experience as being a sudden one.

> He who has been instructed thus far in the things of love, and who has learned to see the beautiful in due order and succession, when he comes toward the end will suddenly perceive a nature of wondrous beauty. . .[1]

In the Phaedrus Plato is speaking of the recognition of divine beauty in earthly objects, but the experience is comparable.

> But he . . . who has been the spectator of many glories in the other world, is amazed when he sees any one having a god like face or form, which is the expression of divine beauty; and at first a shudder runs through him, and again the old awe steals over him. . .[2]

In the light of these comparisons Shelley was not diverging greatly from the Platonic conception of Absolute Beauty or the approach to it. If a difference does exist, it is not sufficiently great to warrant discrediting all Platonic influence on the Hymn.

The Absolute is the source of all earthly beauty with both Shelley and Plato. With Shelley the Spirit "consecrates all that it shines upon." Plato plainly specifies that all beauty is derived from the One.

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[1]Plato, Symposium, trans. Jowett, op. cit., I, 211.
[2]Plato, Phaedrus, Ibid., II, 251.

> . . . if, there be anything beautiful other than absolute beauty, should there be such, that it can be beautiful only in so far as it partakes of absolute beauty. . .[1]

The influence of Plato may be seen in yet another phase of the poem. In speaking to the Spirit of Beauty, Shelley characterizes it as giving "grace and truth to life's unquiet dream." Plato also associates truth and beauty. In his discussion of the elements of Good he says:

> Then, if we are not able to hunt the good with one idea only, with three we may catch the prey; Beauty, Symmetry, Truth are the three, and these taken together we may regard as the single cause of the mixture, and the mixture as being good by reason of the infusion of them.[2]

In yet another place he makes the relationship even closer.

> The order of things, as perceived, is Truth; as expressed in Art, it is Beauty; as reflected in conduct, it is Goodness.[3]

This is the general line of Shelley's thinking as expressed in the Hymn. Shelley searched for Truth through the Beautiful, and expected it to affect man's conduct to the extent of freeing mankind from its slavery.

Shelley was also interested in and influenced by Wordsworth. Mary's Journal mentions different occasions

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[1] Plato, Phaedo, Ibid., I, 100.

[2] Plato, Philebus, Ibid., II, 65.

[3] Quoted by Philo Melvyn Buck, Social Forces in Modern Literature (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1913), p. 233.

on which Shelley read Wordsworth.[1] An order to Hookham in December, 1812, included four volumes of Wordsworth's poems.[2] We have reference to Shelley's interest in Wordsworth even at the time of the writing of the Hymn. While the two were daily together in Switzerland, Shelley is said to have "dosed" Byron with Wordsworth.[3]

This close contact with the poetry of Wordsworth had its effect.[4] Even in the conception of a Spirit pervading the universe there is a similarity between the two poets. In "Tintern Abbey" Wordsworth sets forth his conception of the Spirit.

> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things. (ll. 100-102)

This is much akin to the Spirit of which Shelley speaks, but Shelley goes farther from the concrete to a Source shedding its beauty through the concrete. Discussing this difference Buck explains:

> It was not Beauty in the concrete, as hill or meadow, stream or cloud, or the human face or form, which inspired the best in Shakespeare, Goethe, or Wordsworth, but the finer essence of harmony hiding behind the concrete object, and molding it into form. Beauty was, with him,

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[1] Mary Shelley, op. cit., pp. 32, 47, 48.

[2] Shelley, Works, IX, p. 36.

[3] Walter Edwin Peck, Shelley, His Life and Work (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1927), I, 470-471.

[4] The publication of the poem, "To Wordsworth," with "Alastor" also indicates the trend of Shelley's thinking during that period. In the poem Shelley addresses Wordsworth as "Poet of Nature" (l. 1) and alludes to his grief over things departed, a reference, no doubt, to the "Ode on Intimations of Immortality."

> the spirit of the universe, of which objects in nature are the more or less marred expression--the spirit in which all live and move and have their being. . .[1]

Shelley's interest in nature, whether partly inspired by reading Wordsworth or entirely inspired by the beauties of nature around him, gives him a kinship to Wordsworth. Each author referred to the influence nature had on his youth and looked into the future with a calmness gained from the early experiences.

Wordsworth, witnessing again the thrilling scenes of earlier years, explains that his absence from them has not meant an absence of the experience, for the sensations returned to his body and mind when the scenes were recalled in tranquillity. Speaking of these "beauteous forms" of nature and their effect on him, he says:

> To them I may have owed another gift,
> Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
> In which burthen of the mystery,
> In which the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world,
> Is lightened:--that serene and blessed mood,
> In which the affections gently lead us on,
> Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
> And even the motion of our human blood
> Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
> In body, and become a living soul:
> While with an eye made quiet by the power
> Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
> We see into the life of things.
> If this
> Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft--
> In darkness and amid the many shapes
> Of joyless light; when the fretful stir
> Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
> Have hung upon the beatings of many heart--

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[1]Buck, op. cit., p. 217.

> How often in spirit, have I turned to thee,
> . . .
> For
> Nature then to me was all in all. (ll. 36-55, 72, 75)

He also looks to nature for future comfort.

> . . . and this prayer I make,
> Knowing that Nature never did betray
> The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
> Through all the years of this our life, to lead
> From joy to joy: for she can so inform
> The mind that is within us, so impress
> With quietness and beauty, and so feed
> With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
> Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
> Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
> The dreary intercourse of daily life,
> Shall prevail against us, or disturb
> Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
> Is full of blessings. (ll. 121-134)

Although Shelley is addressing a different being, the underlying mood is very much like that of the passage quoted from Wordsworth.

> The day becomes more solemn and serene
> When noon is past--there is a harmony
> In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,
> Which through the summer is not heard or seen,
> As if it could not be, as if it had not been!
> Thus let thy power, which like the truth
> Of nature on my passive youth
> Decended, to my onward life supply
> Its calm--to one who worships thee,
> And every form containing thee,
> Whom, Spirit fair, thy spells did bind
> To fear himself, and love all human kind.

Wordsworth's "Ode on Intimations of Immortality" is fundamentally different from the Hymn in its philosophy, yet there are some points that are very much alike. Occurring in the two poems are abundant likenesses in the vivid imagery depicting nature and a similar description of a spring day.

More striking than these, however, are the underlying moods of the two. Both poems set forth complaints in questionings but emerge in the end in a state of faith and calmness. Wordsworth asks "Whither is fled the visionary gleam? Where is it now, the glory and the dream?"; Shelley in a similar strain inquires, "Why dost thou pass away and leave our state, This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?" Wordsworth finds consolation in spite of the things that produced the momentary sadness.

> What though the radiance which was once so bright
> Be now forever taken from my sight,
> Though nothing can bring back the hour
> Of splendour of the grass, of glory in the flower;
> We will grieve not, rather find
> Strength in what remains behind;
> In primal sympathy
> Which having been must ever be;
> In the soothing thoughts that spring
> Out of human suffering;
> In faith that looks through death
> In years that bring the philosophic mind. (ll. 179-190)

The closing stanza of the Hymn quoted in its entirety in this same section, is a prayer for calmness, but a calmness which seems to have already come because of his faith in the power of the Spirit.

Just how much this great contemporary influenced the poet is impossible to know, but there is enough evidence for even the conservative student to see that Shelley's poetry in this period was colored by Wordsworth.

When Shelley said that "never joy illumed my brow Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst free this world from its dark slavery," he was using the poem to express an

interest which motivated his whole life. The section dealing with the experience behind the poem has pointed out something of the extent and nature of this interest. It is true that Shelley's attitude was to a large extent affected by the injustice he suffered from his contemporaries; however the movements of the day, no doubt, also shared in this influence. Dr. Lind, one of the masters at Eton has been accredited with having directed Shelley's interest to the French revolutionary literature and Godwin's Political Justice.[1]

That Godwin was the strongest influence in developing Shelley's political and moral ideas has not been controverted as have other phases of Shelley's philosophy. Shelley himself in writing to Godwin acknowledged his debt to him for many of his ideas.

> It is now a period of more than two years since first I saw your inestimable book on "Political Justice;" it opened my mind to fresh and more extensive views; it materially influenced my character, and I rose from its perusal a wiser and a better man. I was no longer the votary of romance; till then I had existed in an ideal world--now I found that in this universe of ours was enough to excite the interest of the heart, enough to employ the discussion of reason; I beheld, in short, that I had duties to perform. Conceive the effect which "Political Justice" would have upon a mind before jealous of its independence and participating somewhat singularly in a peculiar susceptibility.
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[1]Percy Bysshe Shelley. The Reader's Shelley, eds. Carl H. Grabo and Martin J. Freeman (New York: American Book Company, 1942), p. ix.

> To you, as the regulator and former of my mind, I must ever look with real respect and veneration.[1]

The fact that Political Justice appeared on Shelley's reading list time and time again from the year he read it at Eton until 1820 indicates that it continued to hold something of value for Shelley long after the letter was written to Godwin.[2]

Critics, after comparative studies of the two writers, verify Shelley's statement. Brailsford goes so far as to say that Queen Mab is nothing but Godwin in verse, with prose notes which quote or summarize him,"[3] and that Prometheus Unbound and Hellas were the greatest of Godwin's works."[4] Though these statements are somewhat extreme, they do indicate the strength of his conviction regarding Godwin's influence on Shelley. Barrell more mildly concludes:

> Godwin stayed with Shelley the longest. The inheritor, as Locke had been the progenitor, of the philosophies, Godwin was the nearest to Shelley of all the eighteenth-century writers.[5]

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[1] Shelley, Works, VIII, 240-241.

[2] Mary Shelley, op. cit., Refer to the reading list at the end of each year.

[3] Henry Noel Brailsford, Shelley, Godwin and Their Circle (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1913), p. 175.

[4] Ibid., p. 174.

[5] Barrell, op. cit., p. 20.

McDonald,[1] Grabo,[2] and White,[3] among many others, also point out this fact.

Godwin's doctrine as set forth in Political Justice, though in his time considered radical, has become more common among philosophers of recent times. A brief summary of some of his major ideas follows:

> Godwin, like the political thinkers from whom he derived his ideas, believed in the perfectibility of mankind and society. Men by taking thought could, he believed, remove the causes of their political and social enslavement and establish a society vastly better than that in which we live. This society as Godwin conceived it, was a completely democratic one in which small self-sufficing groups governed themselves through public assemblies open to all. Public opinion, not laws or public institutions, was to be the source of inherited evils and inequalities. Man, if freed from them, would realize his potentialities for good. Godwin was an extreme individualist, a theoretical anarchist, believing that government the best which governs least. He did not, however, believe in violence or revolution to attain the ideal society. Men are ruled by ideas. When there is complete freedom of thought and expression, men can be persuaded to mend their ways and do away with the oppressive herating of law and custom. Free thought and free expression, public opinion uncoerced by the state, the church, kings, and dictators, is the liberating force through which a better society is to be realized.[4]

The Hymn merely alludes to the whole problem of freeing humanity from its shackles; therefore one could

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[1]Daniel J. MacDonald, The Radicalism of Shelley and Its Sources (Washington D. C., 1912), p. 72.

[2]Shelley, The Reader's Shelley, eds. Grabo and Freeman, p. x.

[3]White, op. cit., I, 98.

[4]Shelley, The Reader's Shelley, eds. Grabo and Freeman, pp. ix-x.

not say, without the help of other writings, that his idea of freedom was derived from Godwin. With the help of the other writings occurring before and after the Hymn, there is little doubt that Godwin to a large extent inspired him with the desire to see the world liberated.

Shelley believed the poet had the special obligation of being the spokesman of human freedom. It was to this that he was dedicated in the Hymn. But the real philosophy behind this calling is explained more fully in "A Defence of Poetry," written several years later. Shelley no longer strove to free humanity by the methods used in his Irish emancipation effort. Through poetry, or art in the general sense, he grew to believe, the world received light and inspiration for better living. He explained his conception of the place of poetry in the world in the "Defence."

> Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred. It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thought; it is that from which, if blighted, denies the fruit and the seed, and withholds from the barren world the nourishment and the succession of the scions of the tree of life. It is the perfect and consumate surface and bloom of all things; it is as the odour and colour of the rose to the texture of the elements which compose it, as the form and splendour of unfaded beauty to the secrets of anatomy and corruption.[1]

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[1] Shelley, "A Defence of Poetry," Works, VII, 135.

A large portion of the essay is taken up with showing that the awakening and development of the nations have been simultaneous with the production of great poetry, indicating that through the poet the progress was inspired. Since Shelley felt that the poets were responsible for the progress of humanity and that "The abolition of personal slavery is the basis of the highest political hope that can enter into the mind of man to conceive"[1] one can see the psychology behind his dedication in the Hymn.

The power working through the poet is of a divine source. The poet "participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one,"[2] thus making poetry itself "the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own."[3] It "makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world"[4] and "redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man."[5] Believing the poet to be the channel through which the divine blesses the world, Shelley not only felt justified in taking the place of spokesman and prophet but also felt obligated to do so. Working through the poet, the divine source allows him, above all others, to "apprehend the true and the beautiful"[6] enabl-

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[1] Ibid., p. 127.
[2] Ibid., p. 112.
[3] Ibid., p. 136.
[4] Ibid., p. 137.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid., p. 111.

ing him to "lift the veil from the hidden beauty of the world."[1]

After his study of "A Defence of Poetry," White concluded:

> At this point it is clearly to be seen that poetry is to Shelley simply the voice of Intellectual Beauty, that Intellectual Beauty is in itself the sum of all true Imagination conceivable and inconceivable, that the individual human imagination flows from this fountain and back into it and is the nearest human contact with the Divine. It is this contact, in Shelley's view, that both stimulates Freedom and is stimulated by it.[2]

With the aid of "A Defence of Poetry," one is able to read much between the lines of the Hymn concerning Shelley's reasons for dedicating his whole life to freeing mankind and especially for the place of honor which he gives to Intellectual Beauty.

Summarizing the chapter, we can say that the main sources for Shelley's philosophy as expressed in the Hymn were Plato, Wordsworth, and Godwin. Shelley, however, did not serve as a mouthpiece to expound their ideas in the original form, but after modifying them or taking from them only parts, he fitted them all into a philosophy of his own.

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[1] Ibid., p. 117.

[2] White, op. cit., II, 278.

CHAPTER V

STYLE

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STYLE

Despite the intensity of an experience or the profundity of a philosophy they remain unknown to the world in general unless they are expressed in a lasting form. No doubt there have been many who have had meaningful experiences which they would have liked to share with their fellow man and just as many who have come into possession of ideas which would have been a contribution to the great world of philosophy, but the recipient and the experience died together. Such was not the case with Shelley. Shelley was able to express those feelings which agitated him "even to tears" in such a way that we who are living a century later have shared the experience. He was able to preserve the philosophy which he valued in such a form that it, no doubt, will be found in the annals of literature throughout the ages. What was there about the form and the style that served as the preserving element of the Hymn? Was it original with Shelley, or was it borrowed from another artist? The purpose of this chapter will be to analyze the intricate phases of Shelley's style in search of the answers to the above questions.

The investigation will consist of a study of the figures of speech, a metrical analysis treating stanzaic form, and metre, and a study of the relationship of the emotional tone of the poem to the metrical pattern as analyzed. Such a study should enable us to see the poet's method of preserving his ideas.

One aspect of an author's style is his use of figures of speech. In the Hymn Shelley uses the simile more than any other figure. The fact that he is introducing an unknown Deity who is invisible warrants comparison with familiar things in order to tell the reader of its nature. Notice the following list taken from the Hymn.

As summer winds that creep from flower to flower; (l. 4)

Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower, (l. 5)

Like hues and harmonies of evening, (l. 8)

Like clouds in starlight widely spread, (l. 9)

Like memory of music fled, (l. 10)

Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery. (ll. 11-12)

Like mist o'er mountains driven (l. 32)

Or [like] music by the night wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument (ll. 33-34)

Or [like] moonlight on a midnight stream (l. 35)

. . . . . like clouds depart
And come . . . . . (ll. 37-38)

Like darkness to a dying flame (l. 45)

Like life and fear (l. 48)

. . . . . like the truth
Of nature . . . . . (ll. 78-79)

The majority of these similes are illustrated from nature. By their use the specific and usually visible qualities of nature are attributed to the more indefinite invisible qualities of Intellectual Beauty which Shelley is explaining. Their vivid imagery and haunting music do much to enrich the poem throughout.

Shelley expresses his individuality in his use of the similes in series. Grouping them together as he does, each new quality adds strength to those already given. This grouping causes ten of the similes to fall into two of the stanzas, one and three. The remaining four are scattered among the other five stanzas.

By reason of its frequency, alliteration also calls for consideration in the Hymn. The use of this figure in earlier English poetry was for the purpose of linking verse, but in more recent times it has become more of a rhythmical device to furnish delightful auditory sensations.[1] A list of the lines containing alliteration follows:

Like hues and harmonies of evening (l. 8)

Like memory of music fled (l. 10)

This dim vast vale of tears, (l. 17)

Why aught should fail and fade (l. 20)

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[1]William T. Brewster, English Composition and Style (New York: The Century Company, 1912), p. 433.

. . . like mist o'er mountains driven, (l.32)

Or moonlight on a midnight stream, (l. 35)

That wax and wane in lovers' eyes; (l. 43)

Like darkness to a dying flame! (l. 45)

Hopes of high talk with the departed dead, (l. 52)

News of birds and blossoming, (l. 58)

The day becomes more solemn and serene (l. 73)

Of this list of alliterations the third and seventh, involving clichés, loose their freshness and appeal. In contrast to these two weak ones, the first two are unusually striking in their appeal. Each of them plays its part in contributing to the appeal of the poem as a whole.

Other figures of speech are conspicuously scarce. The metaphor, a very common figure, is an illustration. Only two examples of this occur. Shelley makes use of a continual metaphor when he calls the Spirit a shadow and treats it as such throughout the poem. A direct metaphor occurs in stanza four when he speaks to the Spirit and calls it a "messenger of sympathies."

Shelley was not doing the unusual by writing the Hymn in a definite stanzaic pattern. His practice in regard to the use of stanzaic form has been given in a study made by Louise Propst. Her study of 105 of his short poems reveals that the poems having a definite stanzaic pattern are much in the majority.[1] The fact that it

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[1]Louise Propst, An Analytical Study of Shelley's Versification (Thesis; University of Iowa, 1932), pp. 49-50.

was his usual practice to write his short poems in stanzaic forms, however, is not sufficient explanation for its use in the Hymn. The very nature of the poem requires a definiteness and a conclusiveness which is only achieved in stanzaic forms. A prayer calls for a conclusion, and the very form of a hymn suggests the regular repeated rhythm accomplished by the use of the stanza.

This particular twelve-lined stanza form is Shelley's own creation. As far as my study has gone, I have been unable to find it duplicated in all respects by any other English author and certainly not by Shelley himself.[1] The twelve-lined stanza has been employed by various authors; however, the other two phases of stanzaic form, rhyme scheme and line length, are not identical. The long stanza is especially adapted to the subject, since it is more conducive to rather intricate rhyme schemes and, therefore, the more complex ideas and emotions expressed in the Hymn.

The pattern of the line length is 5,5,5,5,6,4,4,5, 4,4,4,5. The effect of irregularity of line length has been summarized by Louise Propst.

> With an irregular arrangement of lines of varying lengths, a stanza takes a still different outline. Although the contrast between the long

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[1]It is possible that Shelley borrowed this form from the Italian poets. If this be true, it would not minimize the credit due Shelley since he adapted it to English verse.

> and short lines is not always so great, the uneven extending and contracting . . . is particularly well suited to the fluctuations of their more complex emotions.[1]

Although this statement was made concerning irregular lines as a whole, it applies to the Hymn as accurately as if it had been made about it specifically. The ever changing emotions from fear to joy, and despair to hope almost demand an irregularity in form. Not only do the irregular lines give the desired rhythmical effect as received by the ear, but they also produce the same effect on the printed page when encountered by the eye. The hexameter line near the center makes the stanza seem roomier and furnishes another means of irregularity.

The interweaving effect of the rhyme scheme produces a much needed unity within the individual stanza.

The awful shadow of some unseen Power	a
Floats though unseen among us,--visiting	b
This various world with as inconstant wing	b
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower,--	a
Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,	a
It visits with inconstant glance	c
Each human heart and countenance;	c
Like hues and harmonies of evening,--	b
Like clouds in starlight widely spread,--	d
Like memory of music fled,--	d
Like aught that for its grace may be	e
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.	e

The repeated a and b rhymes enveloping the couplets bind the stanza together. The complex emotions and profound thought could not possibly have been revealed so effectively in short disconnected stanzas. The poet's wisdom in

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[1]Propst, op. cit., p. 60.

choosing the most appropriate form is another characteristic of the real artist.

Within the poem as a whole there is a similar unity produced by double rhyme[1] occurring irregularly throughout the poem. Appendix B shows the complete analysis of this aspect. An examination of the chart will reveal a unifying chord which tends to form a closer relationship among the stanzas. One example taken from the chart will demonstrate this. Words rhyming with _be_ and _mystery_ in stanza one occur in all but one of the following stanzas. Stanza three has _see_ and _mutability_; stanza four, _be_ and _reality_; stanza five, _me_ and _ecstasy_; stanza six, _free_ and _slavery_; and stanza seven, _thee_ and _thee_. Although this is the most extreme example, many of the rhymes are repeated once and some twice in other stanzas.

Shelley exercises much freedom in varying his rhymes. In several cases he substitutes near-rhyme for exact rhyme. Some of the most obvious examples of these are _upon_, _gone_, and _shown_ in stanza two; _sympathies_ and _eyes_ in stanza four; _ruin_ and _pursuing_ in stanza five; and _harmony_ and _sky_ in stanza seven. One example of identical rhyme occurs in stanza seven, _thee_ and _thee_.

The combination of the long stanza, irregular line length, and interweaving rhyme scheme makes the stanza form peculiarly Shelley's own and especially adapted to

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[1]Double rhyme is the recurring of rhyming words in various stanzas.

the idea and mood in the poem. Could Shelley have written a poem on freedom and felt himself bound to conventional methods of expressing it? Such was not Shelley's nature. A longing to burst loose the conventions that bound mankind found expression in a stanza form different from all others.

In contrast to his original stanza form, the basic metre, iambic pentameter, is one of the most common, both in Shelley's own writing and in that of other poets. Of the 105 poems in Propst's study, 69 of them are iambic and 37 of the 69 are in the pentameter.[1] The iambic rhythm is especially adapted to the subject matter. The poem under consideration being reflective, as well as philosophical, the following statement is applicable.

> Of all our rhythms the iambic appears to be the best adapted to serious stately, continued narrative or dramatic or reflective verse.[2]

Although Shelley used this very common metre, he did not limit himself by it but adapted it to his use by varying it. In regard to his poetry as a whole Propst makes this statement:

> From such observations it becomes evident that substitutions in single feet provide Shelley with an inexhaustible source of variety. Usually the earlier poems are more regular, but even in some of them may be found the diversity of modulation that characterizes later ones. From those more

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[1]Propst, op. cit., p. 96.

[2]Charles Mills Gayley and Clement Young, English Poetry: Its Principles and Progress (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909), p. lii.

> rigid to the freer, although the pattern is fixed, through its regular design are worked changes that lend continual vitality. Whether used consciously or not, their presence and ineffectiveness may not be disregarded; they clearly show that, for Shelley, metre, iambic, trochaic, or anapaestic, is plastic instead of rigid and that he molds it to suit and enhance the poetic idea. These variants, daring or subtle, facile or delicate, grave or bouyant, constantly enrich the basic structure.[1]

Evidences of this can be seen throughout the Hymn. The changes, however, are not made haphazardly, but each for a particular effect.

Medial pauses and run-on lines, as well as substitutions and inversions, determine the rhythmical flow of each stanza. Medial pauses sometimes break the line and make it seem short and uneven, but more often they make possible the run-on line which in turn tends to give the lines a smooth, fast flowing effect. The first line of the quotation below illustrates the first kind of medial pause, while the following lines illustrate the latter:

> I was not heard: I saw them not:
> When musing deeply on the lot
> Of life, at that sweet time when winds are wooing
> All vital things that wake to bring
> News of birds and blossoming,

The above quotation is also sufficient to illustrate the rhythmical effect of the run-on line. Medial pauses vary in strength from the strongly acccented pauses called cesuras to the weak, sometimes almost inaudible pauses.

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[1]Propst, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

This being true, one cannot always tell by glancing at the number of medial pauses whether or not the rhythm of the stanza is noticeably interrupted. The last stanza of the Hymn is an example. In spite of the fact that nine medial pauses occur, it is the smoothest of all the stanzas.

Appendix A shows a scansion of the Hymn with inversions, substitutions, and medial pauses indicated. Since an examination of the Appendix will reveal the extent of these, I shall point out their relationship to the subject matter and the emotional changes in the poem. Just how well the poet succeeds in using the metrical devices to reveal the desired emotional effect determines, to a large extent, the relative success or failure of the poem.

The first stanza is relatively smooth with the exception of the substitution of spondees for iambs on the first foot of five lines in the last half of the stanza. These spondees give emphasis to the similes given to illustrate the qualities of the Spirit. Two inversions[1] occur, each of which causes the sentence to begin with a stressed syllable rather than an unstressed, giving it added force. The first one is in line two in which "Floats" is one of the key words; the other comes in the last line of the stanza in which the characteristic of dearness is being emphasized. A spondee follows the inversion in this

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[1]Some authorities speak of this as substitution rather than inversion. In that case the substitutions would be trochees for iambs.

instance, giving further emphasis. An extra unstressed syllable comes at the end of line eight. This lends to the line a lingering soft ending characteristic of the idea involved. This stanza contains only two medial pauses, the fewest of any of the other stanzas.

As the subject becomes more involved and the emotions more complex, the changes, as a rule, increase. The name of the shadow, Spirit of Beauty, is given emphasis by an inversion in the first line of stanza two. A spondee after the medial pause in the third line calls attention to the important question, "Where art thou gone?" Line five illustrates an inversion after a medial pause.

This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate

Again this throws the stress on a key word which makes the characteristic mood of the stanza stand out. Each of the series of six questions begins with a spondee. Not only does this emphasize the question, but it corresponds to the complaining dissatisfaction of the author. The medial pauses have increased to five in this stanza.

Stanza three is more regular than stanza two, but the first part is still rhythmically irregular. The first five lines and line eight end with an anacrusis. These extra unstressed syllables at the end of the lines both lengthen and weaken them. Lines five and seven begin with spondees and line three with an inversion. In contrast to this the last four lines are perfect iambic metre without interruption. The light of the Spirit of Beauty is being

compared to mist, music, and moonlight and the quieting effect of each. The change from an irregular rhythm to a smooth rhythm is consistent with the change of the mood from despairing questioning to a calm faith.

Stanza four takes us back to the irregularity of stanza two. As he points out the possible advantages to be gained by a constancy of this inconstant Spirit, and pleads fearfully for it to remain, the emotional pitch rises. Ten medial pauses, five substitutions of spondees, and two inversions are the result.

The first part of stanza five retains, to a large extent, this emotional tension. As Shelley describes his childhood search for ghosts and interviews with the dead, the rhythm is hesitant. Lines two and three end with the extra unstressed syllable, while line four becomes almost non-rhythmical in correspondence to its halting fearful emotion.

/ ˘ / / / ˘ ˘ / ˘ /
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead

With a substitution and two inversions occurring in a pentameter line, it would be difficult to point out a basic metre. The last part of the stanza describing the experience causing his awakening to life, flows rapidly. The lines are long, chiefly run-on, and the interruptions, being mainly first syllable stresses, invigorate the section. Line ten is the only example of an omission of an introductory unstressed syllable.

/ ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
News of birds and blossoming

Stanza six is unusually smooth. It is a statement of Shelley's dedication and devotion to the Spirit. An emotion is expressed in line three which is emphasized by an extra stressed syllable, or a substitution of a cretic or an iamb. The only other interruption, with the exception of medial pauses, is an inversion in line five. This still reflects the emotional fluctuation in this part of the stanza. With "beating heart and streaming eyes" Shelley calls the "phantoms of a thousand hours" to witness to his devotion to the Spirit. Only four medial pauses occur.

The last stanza, also, is unusually smooth thus metrically harmonizing with the calmness which his faith in the Spirit has brought to him. Spondees introduce lines four and eleven; otherwise the rhythm is only broken by weak medial pauses.

Summarizing briefly the metrical aspect of the Hymn, we have found Shelley's using similes and alliteration almost to the exclusion of other figures of speech. Their use invigorates the poem and enlivens it with vivid imagery. The stanza form, an irregular, twelve-line stanza with an original rhyme scheme, is appropriately adapted to the idea and mood of the writer. The basic metre, iambic pentameter, is frequently varied by substitutions and inversions. The rhythm is also varied by

medial pauses and run-on lines. The complete coordination between the stylistic features and the emotional fluctuation of the poem is the final proof that Shelley is a real artist and the Hymn, a genuine piece of art.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

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Now that the study has come to a close, we have opportunity to look at all the phases combined to see just what has been contributed to a better understanding of the Hymn. The poem is in the form of a prayer and is addressed to Intellectual Beauty. After establishing the qualities of this Deity, its power, inconstancy, invisibility, and universality, Shelley recalls his vain search for the meaning of life through the supernatural. The real meaning of life and its purpose came to him when the shadow of Intellectual Beauty fell on him. This experience resulted in a dedication of his life to the Spirit, the ultimate aim being to free the world of its slavery. Believing he is in the autumn of his life, he pleads that the Spirit to whom he has dedicated his powers will supply to his life a calm which he so much desires.

The personal experiences included in the poem proved to be of major importance in Shelley's life. The supernatural held a fascination for him from very early in his life to the writing of the Hymn. Biographies and letters provide abundant evidence that his interest in

freeing humanity, though varying in methods of expression, never wavered. The excursion which Shelley was on when he wrote the Hymn brought him in contact with the inexpressible beauties of nature on the one hand and the conditions of oppressed and suffering humanity on the other. Inspired by these contrasting scenes, the conflicting emotions welling up in the sensitive Shelley found an outlet through the creation of the Hymn.

The philosophies expressed in the poem were the result of years of arduous study and deep thought. They found expression in modified forms in most of his works preceding the Hymn. The idea of Intellectual Beauty and many of its characteristics are derived mainly from Plato, whose dialogues Shelley read and admired from his Eton days. The great literary contemporary, Wordsworth, perceptibly influenced his ideas and method of expression. Both poets were interested in nature; both believed in a Spirit pervading the universe; both expressed themselves in plaintive questionings revealing conflicting emotions; both emerged in a spirit of faith. Shelley, although already interested in freedom, was inspired and more fully awakened by his reading of Godwin's Political Justice. It also became a guide helping him formulate his ideas in a more definite form.

Shelley proved himself to be a real artist in his use of figures of speech, choice of stanza form, and

ability to adapt the metre to the ideas and moods of the poem. His deftness in using the metrical devices to express his fluctuating emotions enabled him to convey to the reader his inmost feelings. The combination of all these make of the Hymn one of the great literary masterpieces of the world.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SCANSION OF HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY*

1

1. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
2. — ˘ ˘ / ˘ / ˘ x / ˘ /
3. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
4. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
5. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
6. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
7. — / — ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
8. — / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
9. — / — ˘ / ˘ /
10. — / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
11. — / ˘ / — / ˘ / ˘ /
12. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ x ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /

2

1. — ˘ ˘ / ˘ x / ˘ / ˘ /
2. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
3. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ x — / ˘ /
4. — / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
5. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ x — ˘ / ˘ /
6. — / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘

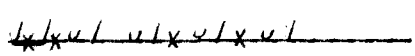
7. — / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
8. — / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
9. — / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
10. — ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
11. ˘ / ˘ x — / ˘ / ˘ /
12. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ x ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /

3

1. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
2. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
3. — ˘ / ˘ / ˘ x ˘ x ˘ / ˘
4. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
5. — / — x ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
6. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
7. x / x ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
8. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ x — / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
9. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
10. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
11. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
12. ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘

*Substitutions and inversions are marked by underlining; medial pauses are marked "x".

4

1. 
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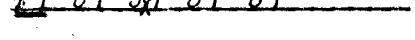
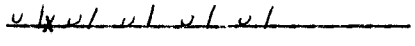
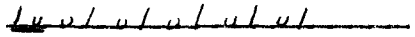
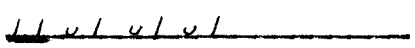
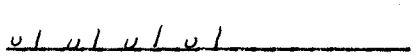
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
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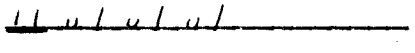
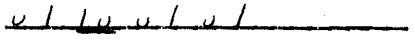
11. 
12. 

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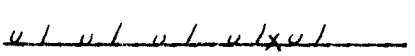
1. 
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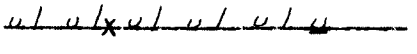
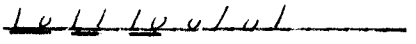
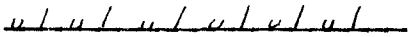
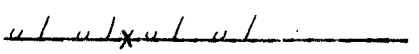
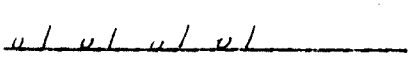
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
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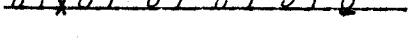
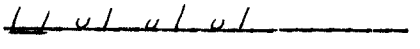
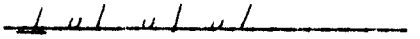
10. 
11. 
12. 

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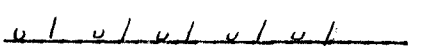
1. 
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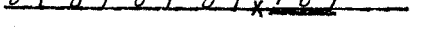
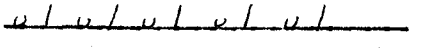
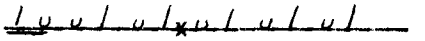
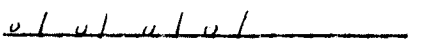
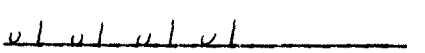
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
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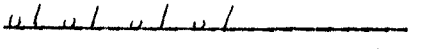
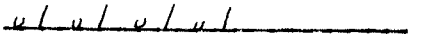
11. 
12. 

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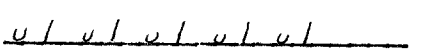
1. 
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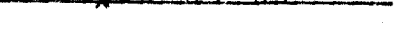
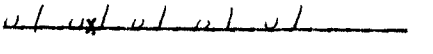
3. 
4. 
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APPENDIX B

DOUBLE RHYME OCCURRING IN HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY*

1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Power	a	consecrate	a	ever	a	depart	a	sped	a	powers	a	serene	a
visiting	b	upon	b	given	b	lent	b	ruin	b	vow	b	harmony	b
wing	b	gone	b	Heaven	b	omnipotent	b	pursuing	b	now	b	sky	b
flower	a	state	a	endeavour	a	art	a	dead	a	hours	a	seen	a
shower	a	desolate	a	sever	a	heart	a	fed	a	bowers	a	been	a
glance	c	ever	c	see	c	sympathies	c	not	c	delight	c	truth	c
countenance	c	river	c	mutability	c	eyes	c	lot	c	night	c	youth	c
evening	b	shown	b	driven	b	nourishment	b	wooing	b	brow	b	supply	b
spread	d	birth	d	sent	d	flame	d	bring	d	free	d	thee	d
fled	d	earth	d	instrument	d	came	d	blossoming	d	slavery	d	thee	d
be	e	scope	e	stream	e	be	e	me	e	Loveliness	e	bind	e
mystery	e	hope	e	dream	e	reality	e	ecstasy	e	express	e	kind	e

*Each color represents a different rhyme. Its irregular repetition in the various stanzas produces an interweaving effect throughout the poem.

APPENDIX C

HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY

I

The awful shadow of some unseen Power
   Floats though unseen among us,--visiting
   This various world with as inconstant wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower,--
Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,
      It visits with inconstant glance
      Each human heart and countenance;
Like hues and harmonies of evening,--
      Like clouds in starlight widely spread,--
      Like memory of music fled,--
      Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

II

Spirit of Beauty, that dost consecrate
   With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
   Of human thought or form,--where art thou gone?
Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?
      Ask why the sunlight not forever
      Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain-river,
Why aught should fail and fade that once is shown,
      Why fear and dream and death and birth
      Cast on the daylight of this earth
      Such gloom,--why man has such a scope
For love and hate, despondency and hope?

III

No voice from some sublimer world hath ever
   To sage or poet these responses given--
   Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and Heaven,
Remain the records of their vain endeavour,
Frail spells--whose uttered charm might not avail to sever,
      From all we hear and all we see,
      Doubt, chance, and mutability.

Thy light alone--like mist o'er mountains driven,
Or music by the night-wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

IV

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds depart
And come, for some uncertain moments lent.
Man were immortal, and omnipotent,
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art,
Keep with thy glorious train firm state within his heart.
Thou messenger of sympathies,
That wax and wane in lover's eyes--
Thou--that to human thought art nourishment,
Like darkness to a dying flame!
Depart not--as thy shadow came,
Depart not--lest the grave should be,
Like life and fear, a dark reality.

V

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
Through many a listening chamber, cave and ruin,
And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.
I called on poisonous names with which our youth is fed;
I was not heard--I saw them not--
When musing deeply on the lot
Of life, at that sweet time when winds are wooing
All vital things that wake to bring
News of birds and blossoming,--
Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!

VI

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
To thee and thine--have I not kept the vow?
With beating heart and streaming eyes, even now
I call the phantoms of a thousand hours
Each from his voiceless grave: they have in visioned bowers
Of studious zeal or love's delight
Outwatched with me the envious night--
They know that never joy illumed my brow
Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst free
This world from its dark slavery,
That thou--O awful LOVELINESS,
Wouldst give whate'er these words cannot express.

VII

The day becomes more solemn and serene
When noon is past--there is a harmony
In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,
Which through the summer is not heard or seen,
As if it could not be, as if it had not been!
Thus let thy power, which like the truth
Of nature on my passive youth
Decended, to my onward life supply
Its calm--to one who worships thee,
And every form containing thee,
Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did bind
To fear himself, and love all human kind.

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